C/2025/467

17.1.2025

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 14 January 2025

on the publication of an application for registration of the name 'Miel de Asturias' (PGI) pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council

(C/2025/467)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs ([1]), and in particular Article 50(2), point (a), thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Before the date of entry into force of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([2]), Spain has submitted to the Commission an application for registration of the name 'Miel de Asturias' (PGI) (EU No: PGI-ES-02777 — 10.6.2021) in accordance with Article 49(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012.

(2) In accordance with Article 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012, the Commission has examined that application and concluded that it fulfils the conditions laid down in that Regulation.

(3) In order to allow for the submission of oppositions in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, which is applicable to the application for registration in accordance with Article 90(2) of that Regulation, the single document and the reference to the publication of the product specification referred to in Article 50(2), point (a), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 for the name 'Miel de Asturias' should be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

(4) Given the fact that the application published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* C, C/2024/4791 of 31.7.2024 did not contain the correct reference to the publication of the specification, the application has to be republished,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

The single document and the reference to the publication of the product specification referred to in Article 50(2), point (a), of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 for the name 'Miel de Asturias' (PGI) (EU No: PGI-ES-02777 — 10.6.2021) shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

([1]) OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2012/1151/oj.

([2]) Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products, as well as traditional specialities guaranteed and optional quality terms for agricultural products, amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2019/787 and (EU) 2019/1753 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 (OJ L, 2024/1143, 23.4.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1143/oj).

In accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, the right to object to the proposed protection shall be exercised within 3 months from the date of publication referred to in the first paragraph of this Article.

The publication published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* C, C/2024/4791 of 31.7.2024 is repealed.

Done at Brussels, 14 January 2025.

For the Commission
Christophe HANSEN
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

SINGLE DOCUMENT

'Miel de Asturias'

EU No: PGI-ES-02777 — 10.6.2021

PDO ( ) PGI (X)

1. **Name(s) (of PDO or PGI)**

'Miel de Asturias'

2. **Member State or Third Country**

Spain

3. **Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff**

3.1. *Type of product*

Class 1.4. Other products of animal origin (eggs, honey, various dairy products except butter, etc.)

3.2. *Description of the product to which the name in (1) applies*

The protected geographical indication (PGI) 'Miel de Asturias' denotes honey that is made exclusively in Asturias from flora and plants found in that region, has the characteristics listed in the product specification, and meets the requirements established in the specification and in current legislation.

Miel de Asturias is characterised by its amber colour (which ranges from light to very dark amber), very deep and intense aromas and taste, and a dense texture due to its low moisture content.

TYPES OF HONEY

On the basis of its organoleptic and physical/chemical characteristics and botanical origin, 'Miel de Asturias' can be divided into the following categories:

— Multi-flower honey: the specific characteristics of a single species of plant are not predominant. Instead, there is a mixture of several types of plant, resulting in a honey that is typical of a particular area:

  — forest honey

  — coastal honey

  — mountain honey

— Single-flower honey: honeys in which the distinctive characteristics of one particular species of plant are predominant, and which have the organoleptic, physical/chemical and melissopalynological characteristics established in this document:

  — oak honey

  — eucalyptus honey

  — sweet chestnut honey

  — heath honey

  — heather honey

  — strawberry tree honey

Characteristics of the honeys

1. Physical/chemical characteristics common to all the honeys

Moisture: maximum 18,5 % (apart from strawberry tree honey, which can have moisture levels of up to 20 %, and heather honey, whose moisture levels can reach 23 %).

Hydroxymethylfurfural: ≤ 30 mg/kg for its entire commercial shelf life

2. Melissopalynological characteristics common to all the honeys

The pollen spectrum of honey covered by the protected geographical indication 'Miel de Asturias' must correspond to that of the flora of Asturias, which – depending on the area and season – consists mainly of the following: Arbutus unedo, Calluna vulgaris, Castanea sativa, Crataegus monogyna, Cytisus sp., Daboecia cantabrica, Erica arborea, Erica australis, Erica cinerea, Erica mackaiana, Erica umbellata, Erica vagans, Eryngium bourgatii, Eucalyptus sp., Genista sp., Ligustrum sp., Malus sp., Prunus sp., Quercus sp., Robinia preudocacia, Rubus ulmifolius, Taraxacum officinale, Trifolium repens.

3. Organoleptic characteristics of all the honeys: they must be free of sensory defects.

4. Specific physical/chemical, melissopalynological and organoleptic characteristics

In addition to the shared characteristics set out above, each type of honey must meet a number of specific additional requirements.

ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

	Physical/Chemical		Melissopalynological	Organoleptic		
Honey type	Conductivity	Colour (Pfund)	Pollen content (%)	Smell	Scent and flavour	Colour
Forest	≥ 0,8	≥ 90	Honeydew honey (honeydew elements – HDE) and pollen from a range of Asturian melliferous plants, including *Erica* sp. and *Castanea sativa*.	Malty, but also with a woody and earthy flavour suggestive of sweet chestnut trees and humus	Slightly savoury, with a strong, persistent bitterness and a touch of astringency	Dark amber with shining black-brown tones
Coastal	≤ 0,8	45-85	Its composition includes pollen from the melliferous plants of the coast and the valleys and lower basins of the rivers of Asturias. The total pollen spectrum corresponds to the flora of the area, including: *Eucalyptus* sp., *Quercus* sp., *Salix alba*, *Malus* sp., *Centaurea debeauxii*, *Ligustrum* sp., *Lotus corniculatus*, *Rubus* sp., *Trifolium repens*.	Fresh and reminiscent of eucalyptus	Sweet and slightly tart	Amber to light amber

	Physical/Chemical		Melissopalynological	Organoleptic		
Honey type	Conductivity	Colour (Pfund)	Pollen content (%)	Smell	Scent and flavour	Colour
Mountain	≤ 0,8	≥ 80	The two dominant pollen types found in the mountains of Asturias – heath (*Erica* sp.) and sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) – must together account for more than 70 % of the overall profile	Woody and earthy in combination with floral aromas	Slightly savoury, with a strong, persistent bitterness and a touch of astringency	Amber
Oak	≥ 0,8	≥ 90	Oak honeydew honey, along with a percentage of pollen from characteristic species of the *Fagaceae*, *Ericaceae*, *Cistaceae* and *Rosaceae* families	Clear malty component	Clear savoury notes	Very dark amber with shining black-brown tones
Eucalyptus	≤ 0,8	≤ 95	≥ 70 % *Eucalyptus* sp.	Scent of damp wood	Balsamic retronasal aroma, sweet flavour with a slight hint of tartness	Light amber with greenish brown tones
Sweet chestnut	≥ 0,8	≥ 75	≥ 70 % *Castanea sativa*	Vegetal, woody aroma, not particularly intense or persistent (medium to low persistency)	Savoury and bitter components	Dark amber, sometimes with greenish brown tones
Heath	≤ 0,8	≥ 95	≥ 38 % *Erica* sp. from the different heath species found in Asturias	Floral, intense and persistent, with earthy notes reminiscent of autumn woods	Hints of caramel	Very dark amber with reddish tones
Heather	≤ 0,8	≥ 80	≥ 8 % *Calluna vulgaris*	Floral, intense and persistent, with earthiness and notes of humus	Sweet, with clear bitter and savoury notes. Gelatinous mouthfeel due to its thixotropic properties	Amber, with reddish brown tones and a rippled surface

	Physical/Chemical		Melissopalynological	Organoleptic		
Honey type	Conductivity	Colour (Pfund)	Pollen content (%)	Smell	Scent and flavour	Colour
Strawberry tree	≤ 0,8	≥ 80	≥ 8 % *Arbutus unedo*	Floral with hints of humus, fallen leaves and wild mushrooms	Very bitter with savoury notes	Amber

Honey from apiaries located in Asturias may bear the protected geographical indication 'Miel de Asturias' if it displays the general physical/chemical, melissopalynological and organoleptic characteristics described above.

Miel de Asturias may be classified as a particular type of honey if, in addition to the general characteristics, it displays the specific additional characteristics of each of the defined types of honey.

3.3. *Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)*

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3.4. *Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area*

All stages of production and extraction must take place in the protected area: uncapping of the combs, extraction (centrifugation or decantation), filtering and decantation.

3.5. *Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to*

Packaging needs to be restricted to this area to preserve the characteristics and quality of Miel de Asturias, preventing the impairment (contamination, strange aromas, foreign odours, etc.) and loss of quality that could be caused by transporting it in an unpackaged state, and also to ensure more effective control. To prevent any of these adverse effects, the honey must not be sold in bulk.

The product must be packaged at facilities listed in the control body's register and therefore located within the defined geographical area.

3.6. *Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to*

As well as the mandatory information, the product labels must include:

— the words 'Miel de Asturias'

— the type of honey according to its characteristics (if applicable)

— a unique control number

— the specific PGI logo.













Key

TINTA = ONE-COLOUR

NEGATIVO = B&W

4. **Concise definition of the geographical area**

The entire administrative territory of the Autonomous Community of Asturias constitutes the 'Miel de Asturias' PGI honey production area.

5. **Link with the geographical area**

Miel de Asturias owes its quality and specific characteristics (its colour ranging from light to very dark amber, very deep and intense aromas and taste, and dense texture due to its low moisture content) to the natural and human factors found in the geographical area where the honey is produced and extracted.

NATURAL FACTORS

Asturias is a region of northern Spain where several major landforms meet in a small area. These landforms, the Cantabrian Mountains in particular, not only demarcate the region's administrative boundary but also separate the Mediterranean region from the Eurosiberian region in geographical and climatic terms.

In addition, the region's soils are mainly nutrient-poor siliceous soils, with some calcareous areas. The terrain is irregular, with elevations ranging from sea level to 1 000-2 600 metres, and the climate is typical of the Eurosiberian region, influenced by both the sea and the mountains.

The landscape shaped by these factors is bare of crops (no plant protection products are used and there are no species of plants from outside Asturias) and has enabled a wide variety of melliferous vegetation to develop, giving honey produced in this region certain specific organoleptic characteristics: honeys from mountainous areas are dark, bitter, even savoury, with floral aromas, while honeys from coastal areas are clearer and fresher-tasting. This mix of flavour, aroma and visual characteristics reflects the fact that a large variety of melliferous plants can be found within a short distance thanks to the varied soil, climate and altitude profile referred to above (meaning that at certain elevations bees from a single hive feed on a range of different types of plant).

Among the myriad plant species visited by bees in Asturias, the following are the most important in terms of the specific characteristics they give Miel de Asturias, listed together with the areas where they are found:

— *Fagaceae* family:

  — *Castanea sativa* – sweet chestnut – can be found throughout Asturias, which is home to the Iberian peninsula's largest population of this species.

  — *Quercus* sp.: there are extensive areas of oak woodland, including Spain's largest oak forest, one of the best preserved in Europe.

— *Ericaceae* family:

  — The various species of the genus *Erica* sp. are abundant throughout the region.

  — Asturias has a particularly large population of *Calluna vulgaris* (ling heather), from which a distinctive gel-like honey is obtained.

  — *Arbutus unedo* – the fact that the 'strawberry tree' is concentrated in the region's sunniest spots means that the resulting single-flower honey is quite different from the other types made in Asturias.

— *Myrtaceae* family:

  — *Eucalyptus* sp. eucalyptus forests can be found along the coastline as well as in river valleys further inland. This species has a marked influence on the local honey. Together with the other plants from which the coastal honeys are made, it lends them a sensory profile that distinguishes them from the other types of Miel de Asturias.

HUMAN FACTORS (TRADITIONAL PRACTICES)

Today's beekeepers still use the ancestral practices that result in unique honeys, which have been passed down over the generations: the bees are not artificially fed during honey-making, the honey is extracted by centrifugation, and the honey is not subjected to any heat treatment that would alter its characteristics. It is this use of traditional methods, combined with an extensive knowledge of the local environment, that enables the beekeepers to obtain these different varieties of high-quality honey.

Moreover, Asturias's complicated relief makes it hard for vehicles that can transport hives to reach most of the apiaries. As a result, and given the presence of brown bears (*Ursus arctos*) that attack hives, necessitating protective measures, the apiaries are stationary ones and few hives are moved from one place to another. This traditional practice is the reason why different areas yield different types of 'Miel de Asturias', since the honeys are produced exclusively from the melliferous vegetation around the apiary, precluding the presence of nectar and pollen from outside that area.

SPECIFICITY OF THE PRODUCT

The influence of natural and human factors is reflected in the physical/chemical, organoleptic and melissopalynological characteristics of 'Miel de Asturias' and its various types. The characteristics of the natural environment and the use of traditional methods give 'Miel de Asturias' the following quality indicator values and specific pollen spectra.

— Pollen spectrum studies of 'Miel de Asturias' show how it differs from honeys containing the pollen of certain highly characteristic species of melliferous flora, whether wild or cultivated, which grow in other geographical areas, including lavender (*Lavandula* sp.), olive (*Olea europaea*), orange blossom (*Citrus* sp.), thyme (*Thymus* sp.), sunflower (*Helianthus annus*) and rapeseed (*Brassica napus*).

— The product is characterised by low hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF) values, which are indicative of freshness and artisanal production methods that do not involve high temperatures during extraction or packaging, pasteurisation processes or long storage periods. As a result, 'Miel de Asturias' is characterised by HMF levels of less than 30 mg/kg.

— A low moisture content indicates a honey that has matured properly. As non-intensive methods are used on the honey farms, the honey is not extracted until a large percentage of the cells in a single frame are capped or sealed. The honeys' moisture content is less than 18,5 %, with the exception of strawberry tree honey, which can have values of up to 20 %, and heather honey, which can have values of up to 23 %.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

As a result of traditional beekeeping methods and the melliferous vegetation present in Asturias, the honey produced here is of a high quality.

Honey was the only sweetener available in Asturian rural society until the end of the 19th century. This meant that the harvest was a festive time, with the honey shared out among all the villagers. It was a prestigious product 'due both to its sweet flavour and to the medicinal properties attributed to it' and beehives and apiaries were included by parents in their daughters' dowries when they married, as well as being bequeathed in wills (J. López, 1989: *Las abejas, la miel y la cera en la sociedad tradicional asturiana* [Bees, honey and wax in traditional Asturian society], p. 97).

Honey was an ingredient of other dishes with strong local roots, such as *escaldao* (a sweet Christmas dish), *deventre dulce* (a stuffed pudding), *frisuelos* and *foyuelos* (pancakes), which were eaten at Shrovetide and traditionally served by a child's parents to the godparents at a christening (P. Gonzalez Solis y Cabal, *Memorias asturianas* [Memories of Asturias], p. CXXIX).

Beekeeping in Asturias was traditionally a sideline activity, which played an important role in allowing people to live off the local woodland and left its mark on the landscape in the form of *talameiros*/*talameras* and *cortinos*, two types of construction designed to protect beehives from bears and other predators, specific to this activity and of great ethnographic value (E. Díaz y Otero and F. Javier Naves Cienfuegos, *Los colmenares tradicionales del noroeste de España* [Traditional apiaries in north-west Spain]).

Causal link between the geographical area and a given quality, the reputation or other characteristics of the product (for PGI)

Asturias's irregular terrain and proximity to the ocean have had a decisive impact on the development of beekeeping in Asturias, enabling the production of multi-flower or single-flower honeys typical of the area. Thus, from the melliferous plants of the coast and the valleys and lower basins of the rivers of Asturias come light amber honeys characterised by a sweet taste with hints of acidity and fresh scents and in which floral species such as *Eucalyptus* sp., *Salix alba*, *Malus* sp., *Centaurea debeauxii*, *Ligustrum* sp., *Lotus corniculatus*, *Rubus* sp. or *Trifolium repens* are dominant. From the melliferous flora of Asturias's forests and mountains, on the other hand, where floral species such as *Erica* sp., *Castanea sativa*, *Calluna vulgaris* or *Arbutus unedo* predominate, come dark and very dark amber honeys with strong, persistent flavours and woody, earthy scents. Moreover, the traditional, non-intensive methods used by the beekeepers, who wait for optimal maturity before harvesting the honey, result in honey with a lower moisture content.

This is reflected in retail outlets, as it has been possible to sell honey produced in Asturias under the label 'Alimentos del Paraíso Natural' [Food from a Natural Paradise] since 2008. These honeys have won a number of awards and prizes for their excellent quality: the oak, forest and strawberry tree honeys were honoured at the 2021 London Honey Awards, the eucalyptus honey at the 2021 America Foods Awards, the strawberry tree honey at the 2018 Spanish National Apiculture Conference, and the heath and sweet chestnut honeys at the 2016 Spanish National Apiculture Conference.

Reference to publication of the specification

https://run.gob.es/wzoMielAstur